



“Food Safety Project for the fresh fruit and vegetable industry”

Phase Two

Request for Applications

Application Due Date: November 1, 2010

Contact Information:
Teresa.engel@wi.gov
Phone: (608) 224-5101
Fax: (608) 224-5111

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I. General Information

A. Food Safety Assessment & Implementation within Specialty Crops Project

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has contracted with the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) under the FY08 Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) program to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crop producers in Wisconsin by assessing the food safety needs of fresh fruit and vegetable producers and by developing best practices to meet the needs identified. PHASE ONE of this project, assessment and recommendations, has been completed. DATCP is requesting applications for PHASE TWO portion of this project.

The components and expected outcomes of the PHASE TWO project include:

Components:

- 1) Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of hands-on full day workshops that address the food safety needs of both small and commercial growers.
- 2) Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of one-on-one technical assistance to growers to address on-farm food safety needs.
- 3) Gathering of existing public resources/reference material and development of grower friendly web tool within the DATCP website.
- 4) Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of a “train the trainer” educational seminar on all food safety resources/programs developed by this project.
- 5) Project Administration – Coordinate and lead meetings with Advisory Team to seek project guidance and expertise.

Expected Outcomes:

- 1) Farms have an increased awareness of on-farm food safety requirements, resources, and tools.
- 2) Agriculture educators have an increased awareness of on-farm food safety requirements, resources, and tools.
- 3) Increased number of farms with on-farm food safety plans (both general SOP's and audits).
- 4) Increased markets for farms due to food safety plans in place.
- 5) Increased sales into local food market sector.

B. Available Funds

The WI DATCP is requesting applications from expert individuals or organizations to work in partnership with DATCP to carry out the objectives and meet the goals and outcomes of PHASE TWO. Total funds available for PHASE TWO are approximately \$44,000.

C. Background

Food safety concerns have been rising in the fresh fruit and vegetable industry and both large commercial producers and small diversified producers are affected. The food safety needs of these two scales of producers are somewhat different.

In order to best identify these needs and to learn about best practices, DATCP contracted with FamilyFarmed.org to perform PHASE ONE of this project: an analysis and recommendations regarding the current state of on-farm food safety within the Wisconsin produce industry. Industry representatives participated in the assessment and it revealed that challenges and barriers exist for buyers, grower, distributors, and regulators. For a full look at the PHASE ONE final report click here:

http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/mktg/business/marketing/val-add/directmktg/blbw/safety_assessment.jsp

D. Selected Applicant Minimum Requirements for Phase Two

January - March

1. Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of hands-on full day workshops that address the food safety needs of both small and commercial growers.

(Recommendation 4 from assessment report)

Develop two different workshops to address the different needs of growers:

- General food safety overview and creation of on-farm Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)
 - Self-Assessment: Do I need a food safety plan? Do I need to be GAP-certified? What do my buyers want and need?
 - What are the basics/best practices of food safety?
 - Growers begin writing individual on-farm food safety plans as a part of the workshop (may use existing templates to get started)
- Audit planning and preparation – geared towards growers who already know they need a third-party audit
 - Which third-party certification/audit program do I need?
 - How do I prepare for and go through the certification/audit process?
 - Who will help me get certified and what are the costs?
 - What resources are available to me?
 - Growers begin writing plans for third-party audits

1.1. Steps to be Taken:

- Identify speakers, workshop facilitators, develop agenda, and curriculum.
- Promote/outreach/recruitment of growers.
- Implement workshops in March in partnership with BLBW workshop roadshow.
 - Identify 4 different locations around the state for each of the two workshops.
- Submit a one-page written evaluation report on the effectiveness of hands-on workshops for addressing on-farm food safety needs.
 - Include measurements that address the project expected outcomes.

January - September

2. Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of one-on-one technical assistance to growers to address on-farm food safety needs. *(Recommendation 1 from assessment report)*

- 2.1. Review Producers First program requirements and meet with program manager to assess utilizing the program in partnership with food safety needs.
http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/mktg/business/marketing/val-add/directmktg/blbw/producers_first.jsp
- 2.2. Identify consultants that may serve as on farm food safety consultants for fruit and vegetable growers.
 - Must have expertise in SOP creation, GAP-GHP audit preparation, and proven ability to work with local food growers.
- 2.3. Identify local food growers in need of on farm food safety one-on-one assistance
- 2.4. Promote/Outreach/Recruit growers to utilize producers first funding to assist in on-farm food safety planning.
- 2.5. Assist growers in application process.
- 2.6. Submit a one-page written evaluation report on the effectiveness of one-on-one technical assistance for addressing on-farm food safety needs.
 - Include measurements that address the project expected outcomes.

January - June

3. Gathering of existing public resources/reference material and development of grower friendly web tool within the DATCP website. *(Recommendation 2 from assessment report)*

- 3.1. Web tool will include:
- On-farm food safety information clearinghouse
 - Links to University, government, private industry links
 - Existing templates for SOP's, food safety audits, etc
 - Resources/funding available

- 3.2. Web tool organized in a “frequently asked questions” format:

- 1) What are my food safety needs for my farm?
 - a. Self-Assessment: Do I need a food safety plan? Do I need to be GAP-certified? What do my buyers want and need?
 - b. What are the basics/best practices of food safety?
- 2) I want to write a general on-farm food safety plan for my operation
 - a. How do I apply the basics/best practices to my operation?
 - b. How do I write a general on-farm food safety plan?
 - c. What resources are available to me?
- 3) I want to get a third-party certification/audit
 - a. Which third-party certification/audit program do I need?
 - b. How do I prepare for and go through the certification/audit process?
 - c. Who will help me get certified and what are the costs?
 - d. What resources are available to me?
- 4) What else do I need to know?
 - a. Pending legislation links

3.3. Work with DATCP web team to develop tool within DATCP website.

3.4. Submit a one-page written evaluation report on the effectiveness of the developed web tool for addressing on-farm food safety needs.

- Include measurements that address the project expected outcomes.

July - September

4. Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of a “train the trainer” educational seminar on all food safety resources/programs developed by this project. (*Recommendation 4 from assessment report*)

4.1. Work with UW-Extension to implement a “train the trainer” educational seminar to educate agricultural educators.

- This would serve as a mechanism to promote the online tool, future workshops, and technical assistance available for producers regarding food safety that are developed with this project.
- Submit a one-page written evaluation report on the effectiveness of the train the trainer educational seminar for addressing on-farm food safety needs.
 - Include measurements that address the project expected outcomes.

January - September

5. Project Administration – Coordinate and lead meetings with Advisory Team to seek project guidance and expertise.

5.1. Advisory Team:

- The selected applicant will work with pre-appointed DATCP representatives from the Division of Food Safety, Division of Trade and Consumer Protection (GAP/GHP program), and the Division of Agricultural Development.
- The selected applicant will work with DATCP Representatives to identify industry representatives including farmers and buyers to serve on the Advisory Team.
- This team will provide the selected applicant guidance and expertise as needed.
 - Coordinate and lead at least 4 meetings with the Advisory Team. The selected applicant reporting at these meetings will include: project activities, objectives met, challenges/barriers, resources needed to complete project work and proposed next steps.
 - Coordinate weekly communication with DATCP point person.

E. Application & Funding Timing

WI DATCP is requesting applications for PHASE TWO by November 1, 2010.

Timeline

PHASE TWO:

Applications for Phase TWO Due to DATCP	November 1, 2010
Applications Reviewed by DATCP	November 2010
Notification & Contract with Selected Applicant	December 1, 2010
Phase Two start date	January 1, 2011
Phase Two completion date	No later than September 1, 2011

F. General Compliance

The selected applicant must comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations and the terms of the grant award. Specific federal requirements may be found on the Office of Management & Budget website “Circulars” information area. (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/>)

DATCP will own all data collected or generated as a result of this contract. Data collected on DATCP’s behalf as a result of this contract cannot be sold or used for any other purpose other than benefiting the fresh fruit and vegetable industry in Wisconsin.

II. Application Information

A. Application Requirements

All applications must be submitted in the format listed below. Applications missing any of the subsequent information may be deemed ineligible. All applications must be submitted electronically. Page limit may not exceed 6 pages.

Applications must meet minimum requirements outlined in this RFA, but applications are encouraged that expand upon and develop project work beyond these minimums.

RFA Format:

- 1. Cover page and abstract** – Include name, organization, and contact info along with an abstract of 200 or fewer words describing how you will meet the objectives of the Food Safety Assessment within Specialty Crops PHASE TWO.
- 2. Work Plan and Timeline** – The structure of the work plan is outlined in the minimum requirements of this RFA. Please provide a work plan and timeline with any additional tasks you can contribute to meet the components and expected outcomes in this RFA. Applications are encouraged that expand upon and develop project work beyond the minimums.
- 3. Qualifications and experience** - Describe qualifications and experience of the project team as it relates to the objectives in this project.
 - 3.1. Describe your experience in leading and coordinating a team of people to carry out a multi-faceted project.
 - 3.2. Describe your experience working with or understanding of fruit and vegetable **production methods** as they relate to food safety.
 - 3.3. Describe your experience working with or understanding of **food safety requirements** for WI buyers including: consumers, grocers, processors, schools, institutions, etc.
 - 3.4. Describe your experience working with or understanding of food safety certification programs such as GAP/GHP.
- 4. Results Communication** – Describe how the project results may be adopted by specialty crop growers in the state and how you will share appropriate project information with the fresh fruit and vegetable industry. Include examples of measurements that will be submitted in final written evaluation reports.
- 5. Project Oversight and administration** – Describe the oversight practices that provide sufficient knowledge of grant activities to ensure proper and efficient administration.
- 6. Budget** - Provide budget estimates for the total project cost. A thorough and detailed budget must be submitted with the application packet. Provide the budget summary in a table format like the example below and provide a narrative description of the budget details. Maximum award: \$44,000.

Budget table example below:

Category	Description	Total Expenses
Salaries		
Supplies & Materials		
*Travel		
Other/Misc. (Describe)		
Total		

* Travel expenses must follow state per diem guidelines. For details: <http://oser.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=6800>.

B. Exclusions

- No overhead cost such as rent, equipment rental, etc may be allotted to the budgeted projects.
- Grant funds may not be used to fund political activities in accordance with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 1501-1508 and 7324-7326).

C. Application Due Date

DATCP must receive completed applications electronically no later than **4:00 p.m. on November 1, 2010.**

D. Contact Information

Applications must be emailed to:

Teresa Engel
Teresa.engel@wi.gov
Phone: (608) 224-5101
Fax: (608) 224-5111

III. Application Selection Process and Reporting

A. Application Evaluation

All applications will be reviewed by DATCP after the grant application submittal deadline. Applicants will be notified during the application process if monetary adjustments to project scope of work and/or project budgets are necessary.

B. Notification of Award

DATCP anticipates that selection and notification will be made in December 2010. The selected applicant will be sent a contract to sign.

C. Project Agreement and Payment

Prior to beginning work on the proposed project or receiving funding, the successful applicant will be required to sign a Project Contract with the DATCP indicating their intention to complete the proposed tasks and authorizing DATCP to monitor the progress of the proposed project.

The Project Contract must be signed and returned to DATCP within 30 days of receipt. Failure to submit an executed copy of the Project Contract within 30 days of receipt will result in the loss of awarded project funds, unless the delay was caused by circumstances outside the control of the selected applicant.

Requests for reimbursements will be accepted on a monthly basis. To receive reimbursement, the selected applicant must invoice the DATCP and provide documentation that the work has been completed (i.e. include receipts, hours worked, work completed) and clearly outline expenditures on the Request for Reimbursement Form. Twenty five percent of the total project funds will be retained until receipt of the complete final report including receipts for all expenditures.

D. Reporting Requirements

- **Progress Reporting** – Coordinate and lead meetings with the Advisory Team. The selected applicant reporting at these meetings will include: project activities, objectives met, challenges/barriers, resources needed to complete project work, proposed next steps.
- **Final Reports** – One-page written evaluation reports on each of the 4 different approaches to addressing on-farm food safety needs. Each report must include measurements that address the project's expected outcomes.

Reporting Compliance – Applicants who do not meet all of the above reporting requirements will be required to return all previously disbursed funds to DATCP.

Budget Adjustments - If a material change (10% or greater) in the budget is needed during the project period, a written request may be made to DATCP to reallocate budget funds between budget categories. However, the total budget amount as dictated by the approved project award cannot be adjusted.